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GURTHA.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

PETCOWRIE COVE is on the north coast of Cornwall, far westward, and near the Land's End. It is floored with the richest red-gold-hued sand, and is shut in by rocks jutting so far into the sea, as not, even by the lowest ebb, ever to be left dry-footed. In the centre of the Cove, the grassy crest of the cliff dips down to within a few yards of the shore. Some roughly-cut steps make those few yards pretty easy of ascent and descent. From the top of them, a winding track leads inland, past a single cottage, snugly sheltered, and better built and cared for than most of those along that coast, over furzy and heathery moorland, to the back of a bleak gray old Grange, standing about a mile and a half from the Cove. Almost directly opposite Petcowrie Cove, there is a small island, some few miles out to sea, rocky and precipitous, where the sea-birds congregate by thousands.

A boat drawn up under the cliff on the eastward-facing curve of the bay, and nets spread near it, to catch the early morning sun, told of the occupation of the inhabitant of that solitary cottage.

Summer was getting towards autumn. At five o'clock, the sun was just rising. From the eastward-facing curve, you could see it leap out of the sea, strike towards you a path of fire, touching the fringed crests of the freshened waves, deepen the red-gold hue of the sand, and make all the pools it touched in the hollows of the rock look like bowls of ruby wine.

At this hour, a young fisherman came down to the Cove; a singularly handsome, honest-faced fellow; tall, strong, and of kingly carriage. A few moments he looked round him with an intelligent air of keen enjoyment; then, seating himself on his upturned boat, taking a book from his pocket, and laying it down beside him, open, he occupied himself about equally in mending his nets and in conning some lesson. Yet, diligently as he was thus occupied, he often, after the first half-hour, sent a half-expectant, half-impatient look in the direction of the steps.

Nobody came down them for an hour or more. He gave up glancing at his book, and fell to low, melancholy whistling. By and by, when somebody did come, he, though quite aware of it, only whistled louder and more gaily, and bent more intently over his work.

A young girl, rather handsome than beautiful, with the sort of face that not even the first bloom of youth and the roundness of perfect health can make soft in expression or outline, but with glowing, passionate, dark eyes, came up to where the young man sat, and stood watching him.

There was a wild, neglected air about her: she had on a frock of delicately coloured, glistening silk, unfit for the time or place, and several costly jewelled ornaments; but her dress was untidy and unfinished: she wore no lace or muslin, no gloves, or any little feminine niceties of toilet. Her hair floated loose on the morning wind in heavy dark curls, a plumed riding-hat dangled from one hand, and in the other she had a number of shabby and tattered books.

'Well, Michael?' she said at last, when he had shewn no consciousness of her presence, though she had stood by him some seconds.

'Good-morning, miss.' He shaded his eyes with his hand, looking up at her. She was then gazing out to sea.

'How nice it is here this morning,' she exclaimed; 'so merry and bright;' then, looking down on him: 'Do you know your lessons, Michael? Have you been a good boy?'

'I wish you had come an hour sooner, Miss Gurtha; I knew my lessons well then; now, I'm afraid, I've forgotten them!'

'Why, you foolish old Michael, you've got to learn for all your lifetime, not for one hour. I've got more books, you see, and I'm going on with your education in real good earnest.'

He looked at her with a dazzled sort of indulgent grin, that shewed a perfect set of small white teeth.

'Bless you, Miss Gurtha, but it's a tough job you'll have of it: schoolmaster never could get me past what he called the rudimentals—never could make a scholar of me.'

'But you'll take more pains to please me, Michael, than you ever took to please that crabbed old schoolmaster.'

'That's true, Miss Gurtha.—Wait a minute!' he cried, as she was about to sit down on the sand beside him. 'The tide's not been off it long—it's wet enough yet to spoil that grand gown.' He took a new red cushion out from under his boat, where it had lain wrapped round in his pea-jacket, and put it down for her.

'That's new, Michael. How nice!'

'I got it made for you to use, miss, when you honour my boat.—But, I've been thinking, Miss Gurtha, as how it's likely enough that you'll get into trouble with your brother if he comes to know the way you condescend to a poor fisherman, now you're grown up into a lady.' This was said with a reddening face and downcast air.

'What's put this into your head, Michael?'

'Some idle words I heard the other day made me begin to think of it.'

She put one of her small brown hands on his big brown hand.

'Good old Michael! But my brother neither knows nor cares anything about me. You're my only friend; you're the only person in the whole world who is even kind to me now.—I think I hate Edgar! I'm pretty sure I do!'

'Oh, Miss Gurtha, that isn't a pretty thing for a lady, let alone a sister, to say!'

'Nor yet to feel.'

'Nor yet to feel.'

'For all that, I do say it, and I do feel it, and I don't tell lies about it!'

'I don't love your brother myself, Miss Gurtha.'

'I wonder who does!—a nasty, mean fellow!'

'That's where it is. He is mean, and I never could put up with meanness. He cheated me out of the prize at the July rowing-match by the dirtiest of tricks—such a trick as I wouldn't play upon any one, though I'm but a poor fisherman, while he calls himself a gentleman.—But I oughtn't to say this to you, Miss Gurtha.'

'You're more of a gentleman than he is, Michael, a thousand times more!—Do you know, Michael, I told him how meanly I thought he had served you?'

'Did you, Miss Gurtha?'—with an admiring stare. 'What did he say?'

'Things I wouldn't repeat—and—he boxed my ears!'. Her face grew scarlet; his reflected the colour.

'He boxed your ears, did he?'—repeated slowly, with clenched hands and set teeth. 'I wish I was a gentleman!'

'You're better as you are, Michael; better than any gentleman I ever met.—But now we mustn't talk any longer; now to lessons.'

When they came to apply themselves to the more abstruse part of their studies, the teacher was as perplexed how to teach as the pupil how to learn: the two handsome heads were bent close together in praiseworthy earnest effort to master difficulties, till, by and by, Gurtha looked up and asked: 'Where was it you told me you had seen such fine sea-flowers, Michael?'

That proved an irresistible challenge. The rest of the morning was spent in searching for sea-anemones, rare weeds, and shells, while the abandoned books fluttered their leaves in the wind. The delicate silk gown was greened with weed, splashed with spray, torn with sharp points of the rock, and

plastered with sand. When Gurtha at last remembered how long she had been down in the Cove, and spoke of returning to the Grange, Michael made futile attempts to rub her dress clean with his handkerchief—a fine one, and a white one, one of half-a-dozen which Gurtha had bought for him out of her scanty pocket-money, and hemmed, at the cost of blood, with her own inexperienced fingers.

'I've had such a nice morning. It's glorious down here! I wish I could be a sea-fairy, and never need go back to that gloomy gray lump up there!—But to-morrow, Michael, we must be really industrious, or you never will get on.'

'You can't carry those creatures home so, Miss Gurtha.'

'You must bring them up to me this evening, in a can of water; and if you can find any of those crimson ones we saw the other day'—

'You shall have them.'

He sprang up the steps in the rock before her, held out his hand for hers, and pulled her up.

'How strong you are!' she said admiringly.

'It's like pulling by the rock itself.'

She tied on her hat, and began to run homeward. He watched till she was out of sight.

The person at the Grange who was supposed, since a young woman who had been her governess had mysteriously disappeared, to exercise supervision of its young mistress, was the old house-keeper: she was deaf, infirm from age and disease, and now and again utterly senseless and helpless from the effects of drink.

This morning, she received the girl as usual with a scolding for running wild, nobody knew where, and for spoiling her best frock; and Gurtha paid the usual amount of heed. She tossed her hat down on the oak settle in the black old hall, made an attempt to smooth her hair with her hands, and went at once into the gloomy chamber, low, oak-raftered, wainscoted, and floored, which was called the breakfast parlour, where the meal was served which was her brother's breakfast, her lunch, and always, when he did not dine at home, her dinner too.

She was glad to find that he was not there before her. The long room had a north window towards the sea, opening into a stable-yard, in which were many dog-kennels; a south window, opening into the churchyard, where the sheep kept the grass short-cropped. A great fire was blazing in it, and after the pure brisk sea-air, the atmosphere seemed oppressive. She flung the north window wide open—from which she could see and hear the sea; but such an odour of pig-sty, stable, and dog-kennel, such a grunting, neighing, and yelping came in, that she closed it, and tried the other. She was leaning out of it, watching the sheep browsing among the gravestones, when a coarse voice called to her: 'Shut that window, and come to breakfast. What's the use of a fire if you set windows open?'

She obeyed the order, and then approached the speaker, a sallow, black-haired and bearded, heavy-browed young man, who stood shivering over the fire.

Edgar Trestrail was only eight-and-twenty, little more than ten years older than his sister; but self-indulgence and intemperance had given him a bloated look, that made him appear at least forty.

'Good-morning, Edgar.'

He gave her a nod, then asked: 'Is breakfast ready?'

'I believe so.'

'Pour out my tea, then.—Not made?' as he saw her take up a teapot which proved to be empty. 'That's just like you.—Where have you been all the morning?'

'I've been down to the Cove,' she answered, surprised by a question which shewed an unusual interest in her doings.—'Why do you want to know?'

'I'll tell you why I want to know'—he spoke savagely. 'I heard something, somewhere, the other day that didn't please me. I'm going to change all that, to put an end to your low friendships. I'm going to send you to school!'

'To school! Why, I'm grown up.' The passionate blood mounted to her temples.

'I know that only too well, and I don't know what to do with you. I must somehow get you made something like a lady.'

'I am a lady!'

'Are you! You'll need to be labelled as such, then! No one will suspect you of it unless they're told.' He stepped back from her, and surveyed her, a glass stuck in his eye. 'Who ever saw a lady dressed as you are now? A fine silk gown, torn and dirty, rough hair, no collar, hands not over-clean.—You should see how the Misses Garstone look when they come down to breakfast in the morning!—It's not an infant school or a village school I'm going to send you to, child,' he said, sitting down to the table. 'You are to go to Paris. Sending you away will be the kindest and wisest thing I've ever done for you, Gurtha, and I hope you'll be grateful.'

'I won't go to Paris—I won't go to school anywhere! It will be shameful of you to send me, now I'm grown up.'

'Grown-up ladies don't stamp and scream.'

'I won't go,' she repeated.

'You shall go,' he affirmed in a quiet way, that made her feel he meant it.

'Dead, then. I won't go alive; so take care, sir.' He changed his tone.

'Well, well, perhaps I was joking. Be a good girl, and give me my tea.—There, there; it sha'n't go if it doesn't like.' He put his hand on her head as she came near him, giving him his cup. She shook it off, and looked at him very steadily: his eyes shifted away from her look.

'You can't deceive me, Edgar, and I'd rather have you swear at me, and strike me (for then I don't so much despise you), than pretend kindness, and tell me lies.'

'Little minx! you talk of despising me, do you! However, I'm not going to quarrel with you.'

Directly he had breakfasted, Mr Trestrail prepared for riding; his horse was already at the door.

'I sha'n't be back to dinner, tell old Howes—probably, I sha'n't be back till late in the evening.'

'You promised to take me to the Witches' Stone to-day.—If you won't let me ride there with you, I will ride there by myself.'

'Witches' Stone! You're witch enough already. Moreover, last time I did take you out with me, I was so ashamed of you, that I vowed you shouldn't go again till you've been civilised. Your habit was torn, your gloves were split, your collar was loose, your hair flying, and your hat half off, and we met the girls from Chevala and that prim prig, young Garstone!'

Gurtha, reminded of this, blushed with mingled anger and shame. She had felt the difference between herself and those pretty girls in their perfect-fitting habits, with their hair neatly rolled away under becoming hats, with their graceful veils, snowy gloves and collars, and dainty little whips. She had resented their gaze and that of their brother; and when the latter spoke to her, kindly and courteously, she had answered as if she felt herself insulted. Poor Gurtha! That gaze which she had resented, especially from Mr Garstone, had been one partly of pity and curiosity, but more than half of admiration: she had looked splendidly handsome in a rich, glowing, gipsy-fashion, after her wild ride; but she was quite unconscious of this, and felt as if they looked at her as they might have done at some curious half-savage creature.

Why had not her brother noticed the faults of her toilet before she went out, instead of abusing her so coarsely afterwards? Because he did not care about her for herself, only about what people would think of him if she looked neglected. Till these Garstones came to Chevala, and were occasionally to be met with in their rides, he had never bestowed a critical glance upon his sister, or spent a word good or bad on her dress.

Gurtha thought of this as she watched him ride away. When she came back into the house, it wasn't much past noon. How was she to amuse herself all the rest of the day? She was not often at a loss.

She got the torn habit and split gloves, and tried to mend them; but they seemed to grow worse instead of better under her awkward big needle. She gave up the attempt in despair, and said: 'Edgar shall give me money to buy new things. I won't have those Garstones despising me. I'll get Michael to sell my watch and chain, and some of my bracelets and brooches for me, if Edgar won't give me the money. But it's disgraceful, if he doesn't! If I knew where he kept it, I'd take some, for some of it's mine. And he spends it all on himself! I know he gave one hundred and fifty guineas for his horse; and he loses hundreds at cards; and he owes his London tailor and his Paris bootmaker hundreds—the ugly puppy! Now, does he really mean to send me to school? I think not; for it will cost him money—but I can't be sure, since he knew those Garstones. He wants them to think well of him; and perhaps Mrs Garstone has advised him to send me away. But I won't go! He sha'n't send me. I'll run away. Michael shall take me off in his boat, and put me out somewhere where no one knows me. I'll tell Michael, and we'll make a plan, and be ready for the worst.'

Reminded of Michael, she got those tattered old school-books, and began to try to revive her acquaintance with them, learning the lessons to-night that she meant to teach Michael to-morrow. By and by, she dropped the books, and strolled out. Sitting down in the churchyard, she began pondering. What would her life be like? Would it always go on like this? She had little to complain of, she thought—perfect health and perfect liberty made her look brightly on things. She did not have much love or care spent on her; but then she had never been used to them. Edgar hated the old Grange. Perhaps he would marry a rich lady, and go away to live. She should be quite happy then! Perhaps, some day, some one

would want to marry her. But no; that did not seem likely. Mr Garstone (to whom she fancied she had taken a violent dislike) had risen in her mind when she thought of an imaginary bridegroom, and him, she felt sure, she should never marry. No; she should not marry; she should live alone at the Grange, and try to be good and kind to the poor people up in the villages; and then, if she stayed at the Grange, and did not marry, she should not have to part from her dear, good old Michael. She was sitting in the afternoon sun while she thought these thoughts; there was sunshine, the free expanse of moorland, and the pure light air all round her; it did not occur to her that there was anything dismal in such a prospect.

Just before dusk, she was called to speak to Michael; he had brought her some of the sea-creatures she so especially wanted, as well as those they had found in the morning.

'O what beauties!' she cried, frisking about him. 'You kind Michael—you dear Michael! bring them in—bring them in!'

'I'd rather you'd take them from me here. I've no fancy to pass over your brother's threshold.'

'It's no more his than mine, and I invite you to come in, sir. You won't see his ugly face—he's not at home.—I hope you don't expect me to carry that big can!'

'No, Miss Gurtha; but you have servants.'

'And you are one of them! Come, follow me.'

With the air of a queen, she led the way into a little room with a big west window, that opened out of the breakfast-parlour—a room that had a fine marine smell, from the number of marine curiosities kept there. She made him fill two glass-bowls from his great can, and then the new treasures were put into them.

A last beam of the setting sun touched the rich colours of some fine and rare anemones, and her eyes sparkled with delight as she looked at them, he watching her in entranced admiration. By and by, she got down some mouldy, old-fashioned volumes of natural history, and read to him an account of the newly arrived creatures.

After a little, when he had forgotten all the uneasiness his position as a guest under his enemy's roof caused him, and they two were leaning together in the window, she turned to graver talk.

'Michael, what do you think of my being sent away to school—quite away—to another country—to France?'

He turned pale.

'Don't you mind,' she said, patting his hand reassuringly; 'I won't go—I won't. I am grown up, and I won't be sent to school as if I were a baby. I won't. Edgar may kill me, but he'll find I won't go alive.'

'Miss Gurtha,' said the young man, speaking thick and hurriedly, 'don't talk like that about being killed. There are ways without dying.'

'I know there are, Michael: I only said that to shew how much in earnest I was.'

'You have only to speak the word, and I'll see who'll send you anywhere you don't choose to go!'

'I know you are always my friend, Michael.'

'Always,' he answered, and clutched the hand held out to him.

They talked the matter over a good while longer, and then she went with him to the door opening upon the yard.

While they stood there still talking, Mr Trestrail rode clattering into the yard.

'I might have known he'd be back early, since he said he'd be late.—But don't mind him, Michael.'

'I say, fellow, what are you doing here?' called out Mr Trestrail, as he caught sight of young Petcowrie's unmistakable form striding from the house.

The young man so addressed stopped, turned, and came close to the speaker.

'Have you anything to say to me, Mr Trestrail?' His tone was in no way insolent, but very self-respecting.

'I asked what was your business here, my good fellow.'—When the two were at such close quarters, Mr Trestrail's tone wonderfully softened.

'To bring Miss Gurtha some sea-flowers.'

'Has Miss Trestrail paid you for them? For my part, I think she has enough of such rubbish already. But since you have brought them, you must have something for your trouble. Here'—flinging half-a-crown down on the stones, and turning away.

'Mr Trestrail!' The man addressed stopped, and looked round.

Young Petcowrie's handsome eyes rested steadily, not on Mr Trestrail's eyes, for they shifted away, but on his face, for a few moments; then he kicked the coin towards him, and said: 'Do you think I'd take money from you?' and strode off.

'Did you pay that fellow for his trash, Gurtha?' Mr Trestrail demanded of his sister. 'He wouldn't take the money I offered him.'

'I pay Michael money! No, indeed.'

'Not money; then, perhaps'—very insolently—'you paid him in some other way.'

'Michael is a friend of mine; he wanted no payment but my thanks.' She did not fully understand his insolence; she was too simple.

'Miss Trestrail must learn a better discretion in the choice of her friends; must be taught a truer estimate of her position.—Gurtha, you've got to make up your mind to the school-plan,' he added, relaxing to a coarser and more natural manner. 'Like it or not, you go, and soon. It's high time you had less liberty. Mrs Garstone of Chevala thinks I am quite right in sending you.'

'You have been talking me over before the Garstones!'

'Yes, and giving you a true character—not, I am sorry to say, a pretty one!'

'I'll not go—I'll not go—I'll not go!'

'You shall go—you shall go—you shall go!'—mimicking her tone and gesture.

She suppressed her rage, and said no more then. She even, before going to bed, held out her hand, wishing him good-night.

'Faugh, girl! you smell like an old fishwife. A fishwife you perhaps think to be, but I tell you you are mistaken, and I advise you for the little while you stay at home, to keep that fisher-fellow at a distance, or'—

She was standing temptingly near him, as he sat crouching over a great fire; she struck him a sharp light blow of her open hand across his face, and then waited.

He sprang up with a fearful oath, but she did not shrink or quail. He controlled himself, and sank languidly back in his chair again. 'Little fury! little gipsy! little devil! But I'll find a way to tame it; I'll have it broken in,' he said. Those

words, spoken between his teeth, and the expression in his eyes as he spoke them, frightened her, and stung her as no blow would have done. It wouldn't have been new to her to feel the weight of his hand; she had often provoked him to strike her.

THE TOWER AND ITS TENANTS.

BEYOND all question, the most interesting building in Great Britain is the Tower of London. There are other places remarkable for this and that historical association; for deeds of high-handed oppression; for memories of lifelong persecution; but none of these possess a record equal in interest to that of any one of the score of dungeons in that gray isolated pile, in which our kings have lived, and our nobles have perished for so many hundred years. Each one of its many towers is a long chapter of our history, full of violence and blood, and yet not without some noble incidents also; each stone-walled chamber is a page out of human life more romantic than novelist would dare to paint. What scenes have those old walls witnessed! What groans have they heard! A royal palace; a state prison; a slaughter-house, where the noble and base have perished by the indiscriminate axe; a burial-place of murdered queens! And yet how little we know about this wondrous spot, that lies at the very door of so many of us. Who visits it save humble country-folk, who 'do' it and the Thames Tunnel in the same afternoon. How few of us since our boyhood, when we visited it with some benevolent uncle, who 'gave himself up' to us for the day, and offered us the choice of the Tower or Madame Tussaud's—the very extremities of self-sacrifice, as he considered them—have ever cared to venture so far eastward as Tower-hill!

A cheerful nod, as we have passed it on our way down the river, in the whitebait season, and the remark, that 'That is Traitors' Gate,' is all the attention we Londoners of the better class—as we consider ourselves—are accustomed to pay to the Tower of London. If it cost half-a-guinea a piece to see the place, perhaps we that are of the Upper Ten Thousand should go; but to be mixed up with a crowd of people at sixpence a head, and lectured by a professor of History in the shape of a beefeater, exactly as if we were at a wax-work, is what we are not likely to put up with, and don't. The meagre, wretched guide-books of the place, too, quite carry out the waxwork notion, and until lately, they have been the only accessible sources from which topographical information—the identification of locality with event—could be procured. This last objection, however, has now been removed by the publication of *Memorials of the Tower*, by Lord de Ros, its present Lieutenant-governor, a book which all should read before they visit the place, and which few, let us hope, will read without the desire of visiting it. Then every stone will have, if not a sermon in it, at least an epitaph; and if we must still run with the beefeater, we need not read by the light of his intelligence.

The Tower, as every one knows, is situated on the Middlesex side of the Thames, a little below London Bridge, and the buildings which compose it present the appearance of a small fortified town of Germany or Flanders. Its wide, deep moat, though kept dry for sanitary reasons, is capable of being flooded, and though of course as a fortress the place would be easily reduced by the modern appliances of war, it is still a formidable hold. The 'Ballium,' or inner wall, is immensely thick, and varies from thirty to forty feet in height. The only vestige of the royal palace, finally demolished by Cromwell—is the buttress of an old archway adjoining the Salt Tower—to the south-east—but most of the buildings have stubbornly resisted the attacks of Time.

That portion of the place which is most familiar to our ears is no doubt the Bloody Tower, opposite the water-entrance, and so grimly associated with the murder of the two young princes by Richard III. As the fact of this atrocity has had some doubts lately cast upon it by some of those sceptics who busy themselves in this age with whitewashing the villains of history, as well as with depreciating its heroes, Lord de Ros has gone into the matter at some length. The generally received tradition runs that Richard, after giving all necessary orders for his elder nephew's coronation (there is evidence that even his robes were prepared), suddenly sounded Sir Robert Brackenbury, the Lieutenant of the Tower, upon the subject of doing away with both lads. Brackenbury, who is said to have received this instruction while engaged in the singularly *mal-apropos* occupation of divine service in St John's Chapel in the White Tower, declined the dreadful office. James Tyrrell was therefore appointed to temporarily supersede him in his post. This being arranged, Tyrrell employed Dighton and Forest to do the deed; and the bodies of the children were buried in the Tower, and not a syllable said about them. There was not the slightest attempt to account for their disappearance in any way. That every contemporary believed that the princes thus met their end seems certain, and hence the general disbelief in England of the authenticity of the claims of Perkin Warbeck. It was always a sequel of the tradition of the murder, that 'the priest of the Tower' had buried the bodies in some concealed place—Shakspeare makes Tyrrell confess to the fact—and surely it is not unreasonable to infer, when two children's bodies, corresponding in age and period of decay with the date of the murder, were discovered in Charles II.'s time, by some workmen, at the foot of a staircase, about seventy yards from the Bloody Tower, that these were the bones of the princes. There were two consecrated burial-grounds within the Tower, besides that of Barking Church on Tower-hill close by; and what likelihood was there, under these circumstances, of two boys being buried in this sequestered nook, under a staircase, unless with a view to secrecy and concealment? Charles II., a by no means credulous prince, had certainly no doubt of the matter, since he went to the

trouble and expense of having the remains removed, with all due respect, to the vaults of Westminster. By his orders, as it is said, a mulberry-tree was also planted upon the spot where the bones were found; and so late as 1853, a warder of the Tower was alive who remembered seeing the stump still imbedded in the landing of the stairs. The extraordinary rewards paid to the assassins for value received (but not acknowledged) must also be taken into account. Tyrrell was made governor of Guines, near Calais, and further received three rich stewardships from Richard in the marches of Wales. Dighton was made bailiff of Ayton, with a pension. Forest's widow had a pension given her on his death, shortly after the murder; and 'ample general pardons were granted them, whatever villainies might be laid to their charge, all under the royal hand and seal, not naming what offence, but covering any and all.' Surely *qui excusé s'accuse* is a remark that applies here. According to Miss Strickland, indeed, Tyrrell actually confessed to the murder, and Dighton also, the latter with the addition, that 'the old priest had buried the bodies first under the Wakefield Tower, and a second time in some place of which he had no knowledge.' That the Bloody Tower was the locality of old assigned to this crime, is certain; for in a complimentary oration to James I., with which the authorities of the Tower received him upon his first visit thereto, express mention is made of it as such. Indeed, it seems probable from the nature of the case, since the chamber credited with the wicked deed closely adjoined the governor's house, where so many prisoners of rank were confined, when security, rather than severity, of imprisonment was the object in view.

With the exception of this stain, however, the Bloody Tower has by no means so bad a reputation as others of his brethren; such as the Beauchamp Tower, where many a brave man and gentle lady dragged out years of misery, from which they were only freed by the axe's edge; or the White Tower, in the vaults of which still exist 'the Little Ease' and 'Cold Harbour'—very significant chamber-titles—and in whose turret Matilda the Fair is said to have been poisoned by the command of King John, whom she refused to receive as her wooer. She is said to have been slain by means of a poisoned egg (which seems, for the Tower, to have been quite a humane attention), and out of that egg, according to one historian, was hatched the British constitution, her murder 'completing the exasperation of the English barons, who flew to arms, for the purpose of avenging the honour of the most distinguished among their class, Lord Fitzwalter,' her father.

The Wakefield Tower (adjoining the Bloody Tower) is, by comparison with the preceding, quite an innocent place of residence. Its large hall, however, has the reputation of being the spot where Henry VI. was murdered by Richard (then Duke of Gloucester); and certainly in the vault beneath it, sixty or seventy of the Scotch prisoners, in 1745, were confined, with so little attention to fresh air and food, that more than half of them perished. The Tower, indeed, seems to have been a stronghold of abuses, as well as to have enjoyed a bad reputation in respect to murders and the like, for the constables appointed from time to time only considered how money could be screwed out of those over whom they were set.

They sold the warderships, allowed public-houses to be built all over the place, and filled every corner with paying tenants. No prisoner was too low or too high but that they put *their* screw on—even if the thumbscrew was omitted in the treatment prescribed. When the Princess Elizabeth was in custody here, the constable, Sir John Gage, actually took toll of the provisions supplied to her, until the Lords of Council forced him to admit her own servants to superintend her commissariat. Her imprisonment was sufficiently harsh, without Sir John's pilferings. Mass was constantly obtruded upon her. For a whole month, she never passed the threshold of her chamber; and even when she had obtained permission to take the air, she was always attended by the constable, the lieutenant, and a guard. Even a little boy of four years old, who was wont to pay visits to other prisoners as well as herself, and bring them flowers, was suspected of being a messenger between her and the unhappy Earl of Devonshire, an inmate of the Tower from twelve years of age, 'lest he should avenge his father's wrongs'—the reason for his committal absolutely assigned—and who only enjoyed two subsequent years of liberty. The child aforesaid was actually bribed with promises of figs and apples, to furnish ground for accusation against the princess and the earl.

In reading Lord de Ros's little volume, indeed, no one can fail to be struck not only with the injustice and cruelty of those old times, which certain foolish persons persist in calling 'good,' but with the baseness and cowardice of 'the authorities,' from the king or queen downwards. Base and brutal as was Queen Mary's conduct, that of Elizabeth was even viler, inasmuch as she was more causelessly vindictive. We do not know at what precise period chivalry is supposed to have been at its best and palmiest, but certainly modern times offer no parallel in the way of downright meanness to the conduct pursued by such a gallant knight (for instance) as Henry V. We have all heard of the respect paid by that noble prince to his prisoners after Agincourt; but it is not so generally known that he afterwards behaved to them exactly as our Italian and Chinese brigands conduct themselves towards *their* captives. If the ransom—always an extravagantly enormous one—was not very soon paid, his noble prisoners in the Tower began to feel it in restrictions and privations. The Dukes of Bourbon and Boucault died there, since their urgent appeals could not extract from the tenants of their exhausted lands the requisite sum set upon their release; and Charles of Orleans languished in those alien walls for a quarter of a century.

With whatever high-flown courtesy, too, women were treated as 'queens of tourney,' and on great public occasions, in private and in prison, their sex was no protection; the cowardice and cruelty of their jailers and of those who ruled their jailers, were beyond anything that is heard of now, except among the most brutalised of our peasantry, and towards some wretched lunatic half-ignorant of her wrongs. Think of Anne Askew, for instance, so late as the days of 'bluff king Hal,' bullied by Bishop Bonner, worried even by the Lord Mayor about her religious opinions, next committed to Newgate, and then sent to the Tower, to be racked by the Chancellor himself, 'so that her limbs were so stretched and her joints so injured that she was never again able

to walk without support!' Lastly, she is taken to Smithfield to be burned alive in the presence of the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Bedford, one of whom, learning that there was some gunpowder about the fagots (placed by some good soul to shorten her agonies), 'became frightened lest any accident should happen to himself.' Anne Boleyn, by a strange refinement of cruelty, was placed as a prisoner in the same lodging she had occupied previous to her coronation; and when Smeton had been induced to accuse her falsely, by promise of his life being spared (in despite of which promise they hung him), she was taken out, and beheaded in the courtyard, and her body thrown into an arrow-chest. For the execution of Lady Jane Grey—whose autograph may be read on the walls of the Beauchamp Tower—there was, perhaps, in those turbulent times, enough of excuse; but nothing can palliate the behaviour of Elizabeth towards Lady Catherine Grey, Jane's sister—Elizabeth, a woman herself, but twenty-five at the time in question, and who knew from experience the bitterness of captivity. For the crime (!) of marrying Lord Hertford, this young lady, with her husband, was committed to the Tower: by no means, however, in his company; she bore her first child in solitude, and heard it pronounced illegitimate, and her marriage to be null and void. This monstrous decision was not, of course, likely to affect the sentiments of the parties concerned; after a time, by persuasion or corruption of their keepers, the doors of their prison were no longer secured against each other, and the birth of a second child rekindled the anger of Elizabeth. A double fine was imposed upon Lord Hertford, and they never met again, notwithstanding petitions to her Majesty, setting forth 'how unmeet it was this young couple should thus wax old in prison.'

This heartless queen seems to have been beyond the reach of Nature, and the contemplation of the domestic love denied to herself appears to have excited in her a virulent hate of its possessor. She refused to the Earl of Arundel, captive until death in the Beauchamp Tower, for the crime of being a Roman Catholic, permission to see his newly married wife, or even to be allowed the sight of his infant son, born since his imprisonment. She offered to release him altogether upon one condition—and in this she was baser than in her cruelty—that he should change his faith.

The Lady Arabella Stuart was another involuntary tenant of the Tower, whose only faults were her royal birth and having wedded the man she loved. Her cousin, King James, forcibly separated the happy pair, and they formed a plan to escape to France, and there be reunited. In this they committed a crime. The husband succeeded in his design, but Arabella failed, and was committed to the Tower, where, after some years, she died, as well she might, distracted with her miseries. This daughter of a line of kings—but far too much out of the direct succession to create reasonable alarm—was buried by night, and without any ceremony, in Westminster Abbey, 'because, to have a great funeral for one dying out of the king's favour, would have reflected upon the king's honour.' The king's honour, of whom his own son said, that 'he was the only man who would have shut up such a bird as Raleigh in a cage:' and such a cage! A cell in the White Tower, now shewn to every visitor, was the limit allowed to the greatest navigator of the globe, for eight long years. The story

of his subsequent release, expedition, and legal murder—perhaps the most audacious ever committed under the shield of law—is well known; but not so well James's answer to Lady Raleigh, when she complained to him that he had given her husband's estate away (on pretence of a flaw in the title-deed) to his favourite Robert Carr, and besought him not thus to make their child a beggar. He received her harshly, and merely repeated: 'I maun have the land—I maun have it for Carr.'

The only tenant of the Tower who seems to have been able to move the heart of king or queen in his favour, was one of the greatest scoundrels it ever contained, namely, Colonel Blood, who stole the Regalia. Nobody knows why Charles II. pardoned him, or rather released both him and his accomplices without trial. The enterprising colonel even became a hanger-on upon the court at Whitehall, where he does not seem to have been held a greater rogue than the rest, for he had eventually a pension given to him, as well as some confiscated land in Ireland. Edwards, on the other hand, the keeper of the jewels, who had almost lost his life in their defence, died unrecompensed. From the Conqueror's time, indeed, until that of James II., the annals of the tenants of the Tower form one long history of injustice. The single gleam of sunshine that strikes through these dark records is the narrative of the escape of Lord Nithsdale from the governor's house in February 1716, the evening before the day on which he had been doomed to die, and it is exceedingly well told by our author. The devoted resolution of his countess overcoming the apprehensions of the timid, and stirring the phlegmatic into action; her admirable address at the moment of her husband's flight; her presence of mind when he had got clear off, in imitating her lord's voice, that his guards might imagine he was still within his chamber; and, finally, her return to Scotland, at the forfeit of her life, to fetch the buried family title-deeds, for her child's sake, make up a spirited portrait of a noble woman.

We have not spoken of the Tower as a fortress, though more than one king and queen were besieged within its massive walls; Richard II. twice, who, on the latter occasion, had the mortification, after parley with the rebel leader in the council-room, of being compelled to surrender his old friend and tutor, Simon Burley, to the vengeance of his enemies. It was from the Tower stairs, ten years before, that Richard took boat, and addressed his angry people with vain words of peace; and from its gate that he rode forth to meet Wat Tyler. No sooner had he passed the drawbridge, than the mob rushed in, and, besides treating his mother, widow of the Black Prince, with great brutality, tore the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others, from the very altar of St Peter, and beheaded them in the courtyard, so often the scene of scarcely less lawless executions.

St Peter's Chapel is, in one sense, the chief focus of interest among all the Tower buildings; for, in whatever portion of the place the prisoners languished, they were most of them laid there at last, generally shorter by a head than when in life. Gerald, ninth Earl of Kildare, Lord-deputy of Ireland, is one of the few who is interred there undecapitated—he only died of a broken heart, upon hearing that his son, Lord Thomas Fitzgerald (commonly called Silken Thomas), had inherited the family disease of Rebellion, and

declared war against the king, Henry VII. His foreboding was a just one, for Thomas soon came to be a prisoner like himself—in the Beauchamp Tower—and was hanged, one fine morning, with no less than five of his uncles, upon Tyburn Tree. The father of this old Lord Kildare was a chronic rebel: he could not possibly help having a hand in whatever rising happened to be taking place; and yet he kept his head on his shoulders to the last, and, simply because he was such an unparalleled scoundrel, received the highest honours. When accused before the king in council of burning the cathedral of Cashel, he admitted the soft impeachment, but defended himself upon the ground, 'that he was positively assured that the archbishop was inside of it.' This reply was considered a very excellent one; and, 'since it seemed all Ireland could not govern this earl,' Henry said, 'this earl shall govern all Ireland;' and accordingly made him its Lord-lieutenant.

Besides the great historical characters who have been involuntary tenants of the Tower, there have been a few others who have had temporary lodgment there previous to execution; among these, notably, Lord Stourton, whose determined murder of the Hartgills, father and son, forms a very curious chapter in this history. He was the first peer who ever 'took silk'—claimed the privilege of being hung with a rope of that material, and he richly deserved it. Our author takes occasion to remark that this was not altogether an empty distinction, since such rope being stronger than vulgar hempen cord, is slenderer, slips more easily upon the windpipe, and so shortens matters. His Lordship's servants were of course supplied with the usual article, and subsequently 'hung in chains'—an expression, by the by, which only meant that *after* hanging in the ordinary way, 'a stout canvas dress, well saturated with tar, was put upon the body, and then a light frame of hoop-iron fitted to the frame, with the object of causing the remains to hang together as long as possible. At the top of this framework was an iron loop which went over the head, and to this was secured the chain by which the corpse was finally suspended to a lofty gibbet made of oak, and studded with tenter-hooks, to prevent any one from climbing up to remove the body.'

The last criminals received within the Tower walls were the Cato Street gang in 1820. Thistlewood was a tenant of the Bloody Tower; Ings and Davidson (a negro) of St Thomas Tower; Harrison, Brunt, Tidd, Monument, and Wilson in the Bynard and Middle Towers; and Hooper in the Salt Tower. The first five were all hung: there was not the slightest sympathy from the spectators upon their appearance on the scaffold, but 'when each head was cut off and held up, a loud and deep groan of horror burst from all sides, which was not soon forgotten by those who heard it'—so distasteful to our people has the sight of blood become, which was at one time shed in such torrents upon that most historic eminence in Britain, Tower-hill.

Interesting as these memorials are, and advantageous as must be the position of their author for investigating hidden matters of great moment, we do not envy Lord de Ros the habitation to which his office entitles him. In the daytime, the governor's house is doubtless comfortable enough; but at night, if one were the least inclined to be nervous—yet his Lordship is a soldier, and doubtless not afraid. 'More than one sentry, however,' he

admits, 'has deposed to hearing horrible groans proceeding from the apartment called the Council Chamber,' where (among similar cheerful events) Guido Fawkes underwent the application of the rack in its severest form. We dare say it was 'only fancy,' but—only fancy!

PRETTY GOOD COMPENSATION.

WE read of men who devour widows' houses, and we hear of savages who eat missionary without—so far as one can get information—any kind of sauce; but do civilised beings in civilised countries deliberately live on and swallow up other civilised beings? Not, perhaps, literally; but they do figuratively, and if they do not exactly devour widows' houses, they devour railway companies, that is, shareholders, that is, fellow-creatures, and make—certainly not for a mere pretence—long prayers for compensation. Of course, nobody would plead the cause of a company. How can anybody's bowels of compassion be moved for a company, any more than a company's bowels of compassion can be moved for anybody? Men act towards companies as they would not act towards individuals, and companies act towards individuals as individuals would not have the heart to act towards individuals. Nevertheless, a company—even a railway company—may be the victim of an individual, just as an individual is—every day, according to letters in the newspapers—the victim of a company.

My opinion is that the Great Southern Railway Company was the victim of Hopper. Not that Hopper would have had the heart—indeed, I might say the wit—to victimise the Company on his own account, or at least out of his own head; but then he had friends, and amongst them a solicitor and a doctor, and it is astonishing what a light can be thrown upon apparently simple matters by a doctor and a solicitor. The circumstances were as follow: Hopper being a licensed victualler, felt bound, after his kind, to attend all manner of races, and it so happened that in attending certain races the train in which he was got run into by another train. Now, there is no intention here to make light of railway accidents: he who can speak lightly of or smile any but the ghastliest of smiles at a railway accident, can never have been a witness of one—can never have felt the shock, followed by the crash, succeeded by the shrieks, intermingled with the groans of mutilated passengers and of engine-drivers boiling to death. But life is to a certain extent a melodrama; after we have supped our fill of horrors, come the droll, grotesque, laughter-moving dance and song of the nigger minstrels. So it was in Hopper's case. Three widows and many fatherless children bore witness that the accident was nothing to laugh at; but there was something to laugh at in the way Hopper was affected by the accident. It will be easily believed that a flourishing licensed victualler whose bar and parlour were always full of customers, was not likely to make a secret of what had befallen him. Hopper was naturally a man without the least guile, but also without the least strength of mind; and his mental weakness had been rather increased than diminished by a practice, which he considered was a duty, of shewing his customers that he was not afraid of his own liquors, and that there could therefore (from his

point of view) be no reason why anybody else should be. So, when his flatterers (and a licensed victualler has a great many of them), after hearing his story, said every one of them: 'I'ope, Mr Opper, you'll be down on the Comp'ny,' Hopper at first opened his eyes in honest amazement and cried: 'What for, I should like to know? I consider I was uncommon lucky to git off with this here little scratch on the nose: why, there can't be more than a ha'p'orth o' bark took off, and d'ye think it's wuth while to go to law for that?' But when one person coughed, and another grinned, and a third winked, and a fourth put his finger on the side of his nose, and a fifth declared he 'must have something to drink after that,' and a sixth asked him how he could be sure he hadn't played old gooseberry with his 'innards,' and a seventh whispered slyly: 'You go to Achan the lawyer, and he'll git you a underb pound,' Hopper grew uneasy, for he was doubtful, first of all, whether he shewed as much knowingness as was to be expected of a sporting publican; secondly, whether there might not be more than he liked to think of in the hint which had been thrown out with respect to his 'innards;' and lastly, whether he did not deserve some compensation for the mortal fright into which he had been thrown.

He resolved, therefore, to consult Achan, to whom he had recourse in all little difficulties in which the (to him) unsatisfactory state of the law with respect to licensed victuallers (especially such as have a sporting tendency) from time to time involved him. But Achan, being a keen man of business (as became his lineage and the hook of his nose), always having his eye on cases of compensation, knowing Hopper's sporting tendencies, and having seen in the paper the account of the accident, was beforehand with his client, and appeared at *The Rat-tailed Mare* so very soon after his name had been pronounced, that everybody present was struck with the aptness of the saying, to the effect that mention of the name is speedily followed by the appearance of somebody, to whom Mr Achan was declared by all present to bear in many respects a wonderful resemblance. Mr Achan was apparently much flattered by the characteristics ascribed to him, for he bowed, smiled, and kept repeating, 'Ah! my dears, I vish it vas true—I vish it vas true.' He then drew Hopper aside into the latter's sanctum, and asked with the air of one who should ask you whether you won the prize: 'Vas you in the acchident, Mishter Hopper, vas you indeed?' And when he had heard Hopper's story, he rubbed his hands gleefully, and said encouragingly: 'Yesh! yesh! my dear, but depend upon it you're injured internally: it ish better than nothing; but if you had been killed, I could have got you e-nor-mous compensation.'

'Thankee,' said Hopper drily; and away went Achan, having settled that steps should be immediately taken with a view to compensation, and that a doctor, a friend of Achan's (a very clever man—'eshpeshially,' said Achan, with a diabolical leer, 'in cashes of internal injury'), should call and examine Hopper. The doctor called, and examined Hopper both by word and deed; he punched the publican about, and as he did so, muttered under his breath broken sentences which made Hopper shudder. At last the doctor said: 'And now, pray tell me how the accident happened, and what your sensations were just at the very moment, and for some time after.'

'How I felt in my inside, d'ye mean, sir?' asked Hopper.

'Just so,' was the bland reply.

'Well, sir,' said Hopper, 'so far as I can remember' ['Memory impaired,' muttered the doctor], 'we had just come to *Six Mile Top*, and was talkin', and laughin', and chaffin', and what not, about the train that was a-comin' behind us, and about the next big race; and I was offerin' Tom Briggs, as sit jest opposite me, a hundred to seven, I think it was—but I won't be sure to a point' ['Memory decidedly impaired,' again muttered the doctor: 'can't recollect the most important matters'], 'against *Flying Scud* for the *Tunbridgeshire*, when all of a suddint there was a tremenjuous—what d'ye call it?' ['Jolt,' suggested the doctor, and added: 'Memory frightfully impaired—can't remember the commonest words']. 'Ah, somethink o' that; and Tom he jerks forrard, and gives me one for myself across the nose with the brim of his hat; and afore I could punch his head, there was another—jolt, don't you call it?' ['Memory in a shocking state,' muttered the doctor], 'and another gen'lman says: "O Lord!" and comes head-foremost, sixty mile an hour, into my stomach; and after that I don't recollect any more till I was pulled out o' the carriage (for I dussn't move, for fear any o' my limbs was broke), and found I was none the wuss of the whole business, except jest this ha'p'orth o' bark off my nose.'

'You thought you were none the worse,' said the doctor, seriously and emphatically; 'but you haven't told me how you felt.'

'Well, I hardly know myself, sir' ['Knocked insensible,' muttered the doctor; 'concussion of the brain, chronic disorder of the cerebellum inevitable']; 'you see it was all over in about three minutes.'

'It seemed to you about three minutes,' said the doctor, 'because you were in a state of insensibility; but can't you remember any particular feeling?'

'Well, when the bump first came, I recollect I couldn't have spoke a word any more than if I'd been born deaf and dumb; my tongue didn't seem of any use to me; my 'art seemed a-tryin' to get outside o' me; and I had a awful taste like ashes or somethink in my mouth.'

'I know the symptoms,' said the doctor knowingly; 'and now, tell me, do you feel at all dizzy when you go to bed and get up? Is your sight at all affected? And does your hand shake?'

'All three, sir,' answered Hopper, 'dreadful.'

This was not astonishing, seeing that even before the accident, Hopper's plan of recommending his liquors by shewing that he himself was far from afraid of them, had produced all the symptoms the doctor alluded to; and after the accident, the kind assurances of the doctor and of friends, that Hopper might depend upon it he was injured internally, had begotten a nervousness which led to greater constancy than ever in the plan of recommendation. So, Hopper was ordered out of town, was wheeled about in a Bath-chair, and was so skilfully treated that he was after a very short time unrecognisable by his own friends, and many a witness could swear, without any approach to perjury, that he had lost three stone within a very short time after the accident. So the Great Southern Railway Company were induced to compensate him (or, to use Hopper's own words, to 'square' him) with three hundred pounds; which, Hopper himself allows,

is pretty good compensation for 'the bit o' bark he lost.' For he does not consider the Company responsible for the state to which his own friends and his own doctor reduced him, and from which he recovered with marvellous rapidity the moment (that was directly after Achan and the doctor were paid) that he was left to himself. Surely this case of Hopper is sufficient to give the moraliser something to think about, and to make railway companies consider whether they would not find prevention cheaper and fairer towards shareholders than compensation.

TIME-MEASURERS.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

THERE is, perhaps, no subject more interesting to human nature than that of Time. Like eternity, it concerns us all; and unlike it, exacts as well as demands our attention. True, as Sir Walter Scott writes, 'it is but a shadowy name, a succession of breathings measured forth by night with the clank of a bell, by day with a shadow crossing along a dial-stone;' but we cannot shut our eyes for very long to the fact of its passage. If in our youth we strive to kill it, so all the more in our age do we strive to lengthen its too brief hours out. Even the means by which to note its course, have naturally engaged the minds of men in all ages; they have been very diverse and ingenious, and a due record of them cannot fail to contain many curious particulars. Such a work has been recently published in Mr Wood's *Curiosities of Clocks and Watches*.^{*} Even the diligence of our author, however, does not seem to have discovered at what period the present method of beginning the day at midnight came into use; but it is supposed to have been an ecclesiastical invention. Among the early Romans, the day was divided into twelve hours, from sunrise to sunset, the length of which, therefore, varied with the seasons. The Egyptians, Mexicans, and Persians reckoned the day to begin from sunrise, and divided it into four intervals, determined by the rising and setting of the sun, and its two passages over the meridian. Our own uniform hours of sixty minutes each could scarcely have come into use until something like the wheel-clock was invented: the ancient sun-dial represented hours of a length varying with the seasons, and the clepsydra (or water-clock) was adjusted to furnish hours of fifty to seventy minutes each, to suit the changing lengths of day and night. Clocks, even so late as the reign of James I., were often called horologes; and up to the fourteenth century, the word clock was applied only to the bell which rang out the hours, or certain periods determined by the sun-dial or sand-glass. To this day, the bell of Wells Cathedral is still called the horologe.

The clepsydra is said to have been invented by the censor Scipio Natica, 595 B.C. The principle of these early time-measurers was a very simple one.

^{*} In those of the common kind, the water issued drop by drop through a small hole in the vessel

that contained it, and fell into a receiver, in which some light floating body marked the height of the water as it rose, and by these means the time that had elapsed. In a bas-relief of the date of the Lower Empire, figuring the Hippodrome in Constantinople, a clepsydra, in the shape of an oviform vase, appears. It is very simply mounted, being traversed by an axis, and turned with a crooked handle. By this contrivance, the instantaneous inversion of the vase was secured, and the contents escaping in a certain definite time, shewed the number of minutes which were taken up by each *missus*, or course. Vitruvius tells us of the construction of a clepsydra, which, besides the hours, told the moon's age, the zodiacal sign for the month, and several other things; in fact, it was a regular astronomical clock. His details now read somewhat obscure and complicated; but the principle was that a float, as it moved upwards by means of a vertical column fixed in it, drove different sets of cog-wheels, which impelled in their turn other sets, by means of which figures were made to move, obelisks to twirl round, pebbles to be discharged, trumpets to sound, and many other tricks to be put into action. The admission-pipe for the water was made either of gold or a perforated gem, in order that it might not wear away, or be liable to get foul. The floats sometimes communicated with wheels, which worked hands on dials, or supported human figures, which pointed with hands to certain numbers as the water rose; and in some ingenious water-clocks the fluid flowed as tears from eyes of automata; but all these clepsydres had two great defects: the one being, that the flow varied with the density of the atmosphere; the other, that the water flowed quicker at last than at first. They were, however, put to one excellent use, which has, unhappily, fallen into decay: they were set up in the law-courts to time counsel; 'to prevent babbling, that such as spoke ought to be brief in their speeches.' For this custom, the world was indebted to the Romans (especially Pompey), and from it Martial is supplied with a pleasant sarcasm: perceiving a dull declaimer moistening his lips with a glass of water, he suggests that it would be a relief to the audience as well as to himself if he would take his liquor from the clepsydra.

A modern story, quoted by Mr Wood, with reference to another learned profession, but of a somewhat similar character, may be mentioned here. 'Dr Samuel Parr (who died in 1825) had preached the Spital sermon at Christchurch on the invitation of the Lord Mayor of London (Harvey Combe), and as they were issuing out of church together—"Well," says Parr, "how did you like the sermon?"

"Why, doctor," replies his Lordship, "there were four things in it that I did not like to hear."

"State them."

"To speak frankly, then, they were the quarters of the church-clock, which struck four times before you had finished."

With some mechanical additions, the ancient clepsydres were made to do wonderful things beside stopping lawyers' tongues. Haroun-al-Raschid sent (in 807), by two monks of Jerusalem, to the Emperor Charlemagne a brass water-clock, the dial of which was composed of twelve small doors representing the divisions of the hours; each door opened at the hour it was intended to represent, and out of it came the same number of

little balls, which fell one by one, at equal distances of time, on a brass drum. It might be told by the eye what hour it was by the number of doors that were open, and by the ear, by the number of balls that fell. When it was twelve o'clock, twelve horsemen in miniature issued forth at the same time, and marching round the dial, shut all the doors.

Hour-glasses, called clepsammia, in which sand took the place of water, were modifications of the clepsydre. Candle-clocks were used as time-measurers by some, and especially by our own Alfred the Great. 'To rightly divide his time, he adopted the following simple expedient: he procured as much wax as weighed seventy-two pennyweights, which he commanded to be made into six candles, each twelve inches in length, with the divisions of inches distinctly marked upon it. These being lighted one after another regularly, burned four hours each, at the rate of an inch for every twenty minutes. Thus the six candles lasted twenty-four hours. The tending of these candle-clocks he confided to one of his domestic chaplains, who constantly from time to time gave him notice of their wasting. But when the winds blew, the air, rushing in through the doors, windows, and crevices of his rude habitation, caused his candles to gutter, and, by fanning the flame, to burn faster. The ingenious king, in order to remedy this serious inconvenience, caused some fine white horn to be scraped so thin as to be transparent, which he let into close frames of wood; and in these primitive lanterns his wax-clocks burned steadily in all weathers.'

The invention of wheel-clocks is attributed by some to Archimedes so early as 200 B.C.; by others, to Wallingford so late as the beginning of the 14th century; but in the *Book of Landaff*, describing the life of St Teilo, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem at the end of the fifth century, it is stated that he returned to Britain with three precious gifts, and among them 'a bell greater in fame than in size, and in value than in beauty. It convicts the perjured, and cures the infirm; and what seems still more wonderful is, that it did sound every hour without being touched, until it was prevented by the sin of men, who rashly handled it with polluted hands, and it ceased from so delightful an office.' They looked their gift-clock in the mouth, and probably disturbed the works.

St Paul's had a clock of some sort at a very early period; in the year 1286, allowances to 'Bartholomew Orologiaro' (the clock-keeper) being entered, in its accounts, of so much bread and beer. Iron and steel were used for the wheels and frames until the end of the sixteenth century, and blacksmiths were the chief clock-makers. Chaucer, who died in 1400, remarks of a punctual clock of his acquaintance:

Full sikerer was his crowing in his loge
Than his a clock or any abbey orologe;

OR:

As certain was his crowing in his roost
As any clock or abbey orologe;

which might probably have been truthfully said of many a less punctual bird; for to judge by the old parish account-books, these blacksmiths' clocks were not good goers, and were for ever being rectified. That of St Alban's Abbey, however, was an exception. It was constructed at a great cost by Richard

de Wallingford, son of a blacksmith in the town in question, but afterwards made abbot for his learning (1330), and this clock was 'going' in Henry VIII's reign. It noted the course of the sun and moon, the rising and setting of the planets and fixed stars, and the ebb and flow of the tide. When the good abbot felt his end drawing nigh, his thoughts being fixed on Time as well as Eternity, he left a book of directions for keeping this piece of mechanism in order.

For ingenuity and complication, however, all ancient clocks must hide their dials in the presence of that of Strasburg Cathedral. 'Before this clock stands a globe on the ground, shewing the motions of the heavens, stars, and planets. The heavens are carried about by the first mover in twenty-four hours. Saturn, by its proper motion, is carried about in thirty years; Jupiter, in twelve; Mars, in two; the Sun, Mercury, and Venus, in one year; and the Moon in one month. In the clock itself are two tables on the right and left hand, shewing the eclipses of the sun and moon for the year 1573 to 1624. The third table in the middle is divided into two parts. In the first part, the statues of Apollo and Diana shew the course of the year and the day thereof, being carried about one year. The second part shews the year of our Lord, and the equinoctial days, the hours of each day, and the minutes of each hour, Easter-day, and all the other feasts, and the dominical letter; and the third part hath the geographical description of all Germany, and particularly of Strasburg, and the names of the inventor and the workmen. In the middle frame of the clock is an astrolabe, shewing the sign in which each planet is every day; and there are statues of the seven planets upon a circular plate of iron; so that every day the planet that rules the day comes forth, the rest being hid within the frames till they come out of course at their day, as the sun upon Sunday, and so for all the week. There is a terrestrial globe, which shews the quarter, the half-hour, and the minutes. There is a figure of a human skull, and statues of two boys, whereof one turns the hour-glass when the clock hath struck, and the other puts forth the rod in his hand at each stroke of the clock. Moreover, there are statues of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, and many observations of the moon. In the upper part of the clock are four old men's statues, which strike the quarters of the hour. The statue of Death comes out at each quarter to strike, but is driven back by the statue of Christ, with a spear in his hand, for three quarters; but in the fourth quarter Death strikes the hour with the bone in his hand, and then the chimes sound. On the top of the clock is the image of a cock, which twice in a day crows aloud and claps his wings. Besides, this clock is decked with many rare pictures, and being on the inside of the church, carries another frame to the outside of the walls, whereon the hours of the sun, the courses of the moon, the length of the day, and such other things are set out with much art.' But perhaps the most striking part of the history of this famous Strasburg clock was, that it was made, or, at all events, perfected by a blind man. The artisan who contrived it lost his sight, and was superseded; but since nobody else would carry out his ideas, and he refused to communicate them, he was reinstated in his work, and actually carried out the affair, in all its intricate delicacy, to the end. There are several other examples of blind clockmakers, and

even watchmakers. 'The *Illustrated London News* of August 23, 1851, tells us that there was then living at Holbeach, Lincolnshire, a watchmaker named Rippin, who was completely blind. He was a first-rate hand at his business, and it was truly surprising to observe with what ease he could take to pieces and place together again watches of the most delicate mechanism. Some years previously, Rippin was robbed, and the property taken from him consisted of watch-wheels, hair-springs, and other tiny things belonging to the trade. The thief was traced, and convicted at Spalding sessions, the blind man having sworn to his property by feeling.'

Those who are accustomed only to eight-day clocks will be astonished to learn that some time-pieces have been made to go for a hundred years! The Marquis of Bute had one at Luton Park; and 'in Sir John Moore's account of his "large sphere-going clockwork" (*Mathem. Compend.*) we read that it made a revolution of once in seventeen thousand one hundred years, by means of six wheels and five pinions, for the sun's apogeeum.' Instead of 'it made,' one should surely here read 'it was made to make,' since the oldest inhabitant could scarcely certify to the fact having been performed. In 1859, after years of labour, James White, of Wickham Market, completed a self-winding clock, which determined the time with unfailing accuracy, continuing a constant motion by itself, never requiring to be wound up, and being capable of perpetuating its movements so long as its component parts should exist.

Italy boasts of some curious native clockwork. Early in the last century, at the Palazzo di Colonna at Rome, was a portable clock, which was wound up only once a year, and shewed the hour of the day, the month, and the year; and the popes possessed for two centuries a horological marvel, which, passing through the hands of King William I. of the Netherlands, was exhibited to our Royal Society so late as 1848. This was produced solely by manual labour, without any other help than the bench of the turner and the file; yet it shews the date of the month and all the Catholic feasts and holidays throughout the year. Seven heathen gods make their appearance, each on his proper week-day, exactly in front, and is relieved, after twenty-four hours' duty, by the next. 'In the centre of the second division (the clock being a tower of three stories) is an image of the Virgin, holding her son Jesus in her arms; two angels are seen placing crowns and garlands on her head; and during the performance of the bells, several angels appear making their obeisance before the image of Mary and the Saviour. Within the centre of the third division is a metal bell hanging on a gilt plate of copper, on which is represented the judgment-day. Round this metal plate move four silver figures, set in motion by mechanism, representing the four states of social life. These images point out the quarters of the hour by striking the bell; the first quarter is represented by a youth, the second by a grave citizen, the third by a Roman soldier, and the fourth by a priest. In the fourth division is likewise a metal bell, on the sides of which are chambers; on the left side is the representation of Death, proclaiming the hours of day and night by striking the bell; above it is seen a Latin inscription, from Romans, chapter vii. verse 23. At the right side is the image of the Saviour, stepping forward, with the globe in his hand, and

above it the cross. This figure proceeds, every two minutes, in a slow manner, and then, for a moment, hides itself from view; above it is a Latin verse from the prophet Hosea, chapter xiii. These two figures are of massive silver. Behind the bell is inscribed the name of the artist, and the date 1589.' Many ancient clocks upon the continent exhibit processions of saints and various other religious automata; but the most singular of all, perhaps, is one in the cathedral of St John at Lyon. 'On the top of it stands a cock, that every three hours claps his wings and crows thrice. In a gallery underneath, a door opens on one side, and out comes the Virgin Mary; and from a door on the other side the angel Gabriel, who meets and salutes her. At the same time a door opens in the alcove part, out of which the form of a dove, representing the Holy Ghost, descends upon the Virgin's head. After this, these figures retire, and from a door in the middle comes forth the figure of a reverend father, lifting up his hand and giving his benediction to the spectators. The days of the week are represented by seven figures, each of which takes its place in a niche on the morning of the day that it represents, and continues there until midnight. The greatest curiosity is an oval plate marked with the minutes of an hour, which are exactly pointed out by a hand reaching the circumference, that insensibly dilates and contracts itself during the revolution. This curious machine, although not so perfect now in all its movements as when it was originally constructed, has suffered but little injury during a long course of years, owing to the care and skill of those who were appointed to look after it. It appears from an inscription on the clock itself that it was repaired and improved by one Morrison in 1661; but it was contrived long before that time by Nicholas Lipp, a native of Basle, who finished it in 1598, when he was about thirty years of age. The oval minute motion was invented by M. Servier, and is of later date. There is a tradition that the ingenious artist, Lipp, had his eyes put out by order of the magistrates of Lyon, that he might not be able to make another clock like this; but so far from this being true, the justices of Lyon engaged him to take care of his own machine, at a handsome salary.'

Ingenious, however, as are the quasi-religious automata above mentioned, how inferior are they in human interest when compared with the time-piece possessed by Mrs Forester at Great Brickhill, Bucks, 'the identical clock which was at Whitehall at the time of the execution of Charles I., and by which the fatal moment was regulated.' At that period (the seventeenth century), there was a great taste for striking-clocks. 'Several of them, made by Thomas Tompion, who invented many useful things in clockwork, not only struck the quarters on eight bells, but also the hour after each quarter. At twelve o'clock, forty-four blows were struck, and one hundred and thirteen between twelve and one o'clock. Failures in the striking mechanism of these clocks were attended with much annoyance to the owners of them, for they would go on striking without cessation until the weight or spring had gone down, and they were frequently contrived to go for a month. A clock made by Tompion on this construction caused much annoyance to the Duchess of Gloucester soon after her marriage. This machine was fixed in an apartment adjoining her bedchamber; the failure took place at two o'clock in the morning, and, as the case

could not be opened, the clock continued to strike until eight o'clock—a tintinnabulum which, we think, must have scared away the hovering Hymen from the bridal-bed.'

LORD ULSWATER.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE NURSERY OF ST PAGANS.

GOOD workmen, says the proverb, do not quarrel with their tools—a rule which, unless all improvements originate with the bad workmen, should have kept us still in the 'stone age,' with flint knives and bone arrow-heads. And although it is true that great results may be wrought out with scanty means, as when some poor half-naked Hindu jeweller, with his bamboo blowpipe and clumsy instruments, elaborates massive bangles and fairy chains, such as all the appliances at the command of European goldsmiths would fail to supply, there are tools with which it is hard not to quarrel—not tools of iron, or steel, or brass, indeed; nothing that can be ground and sharpened, and pointed and filed, and polished with emery and chamois leather, but tools of flesh and blood, with wills of their own, and souls of their own, for ever disturbing the calculations, and troubling the repose of the employer.

These flesh-and-blood tools, these fellow-creatures who do the bidding of a master—and the name is never given save to those whose task is to do evil for another's gain—have always been among the worst stumbling-blocks of statecraft. They have a terrible tendency to wound the hand that guides them, to recoil upon their owner, to prove fatal to him who wields them, like the Dwarf's Sword in the Saga. They renew the weird stories of those wretched men, sold to the Fiend, to whom the insatiable familiar demon came night after night, week after week, year after year, crying: 'Work, master, work!—give me my task, or I rend thee limb from limb!' Even a Borgia cannot always break the instruments that have done their vile task, and have grown dangerous. There were two men on that pleasant English south coast where Shelton-on-Sea nestled, and St Pagans stood lofty on its cliff, who began to learn this bitter lesson in a practical way—Mr Marsh and Lord Ulswater.

It has been seen how Lord Ulswater treated Mr Marsh, and how Mr Marsh in turn treated Huller, the pauper ward-master, gate-porter, or whatever else he might have been, at Shelton workhouse. Both men acted on the self-same principle, that which the beast-tamer never dares to forget, as he moves, carrying his life in his hand, amid a cageful of those grim paws and jaws and gleaming eyes, by help of which he earns his bread. The same rule that a man must bear in mind if his dangerous livelihood be won by fearless self-exposure among brutes that hunger for his flesh and thirst for his blood, of necessity guides one who has human tools to manage. Keep the mastery over lion, and tiger, and panther, and they are but so many Great Cats, after all, ready to leap at your bidding, and to crouch and serve you for a footstool. So also with unscrupulous men and women; but these are the harder to understand, and hence the harder to deal with.

The peer and the surgeon had, each in his own way, asserted with complete success a certain amount of authority over an instrument, and had been prompt to nip rebellion in the bud. Could

the shade of Macchiavelli have hovered over Shelton-on-Sea and its neighbourhood, no doubt but that the diplomatic spectre would have smiled a dark smile of approval on the superior tactics of Lord Ulswater. He had been firm in fact, but not insolent in manner. Never to cause needless irritation, never to pique and vex, to deal no light blows, but to wait till the stroke can crush—such were cardinal points of worldly wisdom ages before the great Florentine secretary wore swaddling-clothes. Mr Marsh, on the other hand, had been brutal in his outspoken scorn for his satellite, and though old Huller had grovelled, morally, in the dust before his sneering censor, it was not at all wise to inflict unnecessary pain. It is not well to be hated, and especially not well to be hated gratis.

But John, Lord Ulswater, as he paced to and fro among the lonely rooms of the uninhabited portion of the abbey, was by no means easy in his mind as to the sagacity of the part which he had elected to play. Once and again the doubt recurred to him that he had been wrong in dealing so sternly with Mr Marsh. Whatever the nature of the bond between the bankrupt tenant of Number eight Cavendish Terrace and himself, he could not deny to himself that to make the surgeon his enemy would be, not suicidal, for he might weather the storm, but a perilous folly. He had been hasty, perhaps, in rejecting the man's petition, ungraciously preferred, it was true, but not wholly unreasonable, to be granted a new start in life. He knew Mr Marsh to be a clever man, learned, adroit, not too heavily ballasted with scruples to climb by backstairs influence, or to make each fresh family confidence a stepping-stone whereby to rise. His ambition was not unnatural. He was a better doctor than scores of West-end oracles were. The dole of a little money, grudgingly given, thanklessly taken, was but a poor hold upon the allegiance of a man of Marsh's stamp, a man who, even in his degradation, felt the fierce thrill of imprisoned genius stinging him like Io's gadfly. 'After all,' said Lord Ulswater to himself, with a low laugh of mockery—'after all, my best chance might be to let the dog become Sir Stephen Marsh, Baronet and Royal Physician. He would have given bail, then, for his discretion. A golden padlock of fees would close his mouth famously. Gratitude, they say, means a lively sense of benefits to come. Well, if I try Marsh with a little of the sunshine that makes the traveller in the fable drop the cloak that he had held fast in rain and wind—yes, but I forgot the rust of drink that has eaten into him—too deep, perhaps—would it were deeper still, and that he were drowned in liquor, like Clarence.'

With a momentary expression of disgust upon his handsome, clear-cut face, Lord Ulswater dismissed the subject. We are all inclined to bear with peculiar severity upon vices that tempt us not, and the gross excitement caused by excessive drinking was a swinish joy not likely to meet with much sympathy from John Carnac. The reformation of Mr Marsh might or might not be possible, but at anyrate my Lord had other matters to think of, other projects to pursue, other dangers to avert. There was one foe of whom he knew, compared with whom Marsh, let him do his worst, was but a very harmless reptile, a foe not to be bribed, or bought, or wearied out, or cajoled—but she was far away, beyond thousands of miles of the salt sea, on the other side of the world.

Some reminiscence, connected, it may be, with that distant and unseen source of peril, guided Lord Ulswater's wandering steps to that part of the disused wing of the abbey which abutted most nearly on the inhabited portion of the house. Here, before the door of a room, he stopped, laid his grasp upon the handle, and stood hesitating. 'Yet, why not?' he asked himself peevishly; and with a violent jerk, he threw the door open, went in, and shut it. 'I forgot that it would be dark,' he said, in the same petulant tone as before, a tone very unlike that of his ordinary voice, and he made a movement towards the door, but instantly turned back, setting his teeth hard, and frowning slightly, as if angry with himself. Then he stood motionless, waiting until his eyes should become accustomed to the darkness. It was dark because the shutters were closed, and because the curtains were drawn, but it was not the utter blackness of a cave or a cellar; it was rather like the cool dim chiaro-oscuro in which the sun-dreading Italians love to keep their large marble-floored saloons during the dog-days; and by slow degrees Lord Ulswater was able to distinguish the objects around him.

One by one they rose before his vision, as if seen in the magic glass of some enchanter, the outlines of the inanimate things amid which he stood. The chairs, the sofa, the tables, the presses and cumbrous chests of drawers, stood out clearly against the background of shadow. Last of all, the great bed, with its heavy hangings, its carved posts, its fringed canopy, became discernible amid the gloom. A gloomy bed, but a splendid one, for the nursery of St Pagans was not as other nurseries, no mere clean, cheerful, airy room, where young children might prattle and play, happy in the fresh joy of space and light: it was a room of sullen, dull magnificence, in which a sovereign of England had slept, in right royal pomp, but where childish joy, and childish sport, and the light life of childhood, found little countenance from the surroundings. Here Guy, who should have been Lord Ulswater, had lived, and here he had died.

Yes, here, on that bed, had died the infant son of Reginald, Baron Ulswater. His death, or the hour before his death, Lady Harriet, his great-aunt, had described to Ruth Morgan. This was the very room. There, beside the table, in the great chair, no doubt, had sat the boy's nurse, that beautiful, fierce, reserved young woman—she whom the Honourable John Carnac had recommended to his brother's service as his nephew's attendant—that steady, careful waiting-maid, whose strange likeness to the Hebrew Jael that slew Sisera, Lady Harriet Ashe had taken to heart so keenly. Yes; there she had sat, watchful, in her dark beauty, a lithe young panther, and that lamb so nigh.

He stood in his uncle's way, the helpless boy who should have won the Ulswater coronet. He was weak Reginald's son. He had no mother, only good, stiff Lady Harriet, whose devotion was to the sickly father, not to the rosy child that had so little a breathing-time in this our world. He died—died—died. Reginald, Baron Ulswater, a feeble, frail-bodied lord, who grew weaker, as others grow stronger, year after year, died too; and John Carnac had the rank and the lands.

Yes, there was the grand old bed, with its embossed coronet and the Carnac arms—won on a bloody battlefield—in dead gold; and the tapestry-work done by deft and patient fingers, long since

turned to dust, bone and flesh of them; and the hangings of gorgeous brocade, wrought, perhaps, when Mary of Burgundy was princess over the looms of Ghent; and the woodwork done by artists who had worked for the rich monasteries of unreformed England. There it was. Under that coronet, under that escutcheon, beneath the gold and silk of the canopy, the child had died.

John, Lord Ulswater, stood gazing on this stately couch with eyes that never wavered, proud, hard, pitiless. The great sorrow that had shortened the life of his ailing elder brother, the beautiful child's death, had been a gain to the heir of title and estate—no doubt of that. But it was a sad heritage. The bright glorious youth, of whom most men and all women said that it was pity he were not head of the House, was now its chief, but it was a great shipwreck of fond hopes that had landed him in his place of honour.

The nursery at St Pagans was now a room held accursed—not wholly, no doubt, because the child had drawn its last breath there, though that, with its effect on Reginald, Lord Ulswater, so soon to follow, had been the immediate cause. But there had been other deaths in that room; other deeds were rumoured to have been done there, crimes of long-ago, sufferings of the old, cruel, shameful past, had taken place within those four walls. A strange half-crazed cynic was he, the Wicked Lord, who first made this ex-royal chamber the nursery of St Pagans. No one ever came to this sad room, save only the housekeeper on her monthly tour of inspection, with her rustling silks and her prim cap, and her squadron of maids at her heels, ready, with besom and duster, and brush of feathers, to keep the rooms free at least from the spider. There were no spiders in the haunted nursery—not a gossamer-line of cobweb spanned the space from cornice to chimney-piece or from wainscot to floor. But the girls who did the work were always uneasy and frightened, peering over their shoulders, cowardly, even in the noonday sunshine, and reluctant to be left alone. They could brush away the cobwebs and the dust, but they could not clear away the dark memories that clung, batlike, to the dim old room.

'Ay, there he died. Pity, too—so fair a child—no elf-changeling like his father—had he been mine!' John, Lord Ulswater's voice, always rich and powerful, grew sweet and mournful as he concluded. He stood quite still, looking at the bed with the brocaded curtains and the rich escutcheon. He looked long and steadily, and by the working of his face it might have been thought that there rose before him, not merely the empty bed and the heraldic device, but the child's face, worn by illness, but frank and bold to the last—a bright lovely face, with the curls clustering thickly about the broad white brow. There the child had lain, beneath the proud escutcheon of his race. There, at the table, had the nurse watched and waited, the lithe, dark, beautiful creature, whom the household of St Pagans knew as Mrs Emma Fletcher.

Lord Ulswater turned on his heel at last; slowly, and with no sign of discomposure, he turned to go. Without any unseemly hurry or hesitation, he left the room. On the broad shallow steps of the grand staircase, he paused. 'Was John so very vile?' he said sneeringly. 'Young Arthur, no doubt, should have been King of England, Duke of Normandy, Bretagne, and the rest. But—Ah! it was a great prize. I suppose my namesake thought it

worth the keeping. I suppose I am like him—somehow.

Yet an impartial observer might have thought that John Carnac, Baron Ulswater, looked more like Richard of the Lion-heart than like the cruel, cowardly, under-sized John of England, as he went slowly down the great staircase. And how can we be sure that Richard, flower of chivalry, hero of romaunt, robber, ravisher, homicide, no less than knight-errant, poet, and minstrel, would have been true liegeman and faithful protector to a boy-nephew!

Something of the old ruthless spirit must have been shining in Lord Ulswater's eyes as he stood on the last step of the stairs, and met Miss Morgan, leaning on her maid's arm, as usual, face to face; for she started and changed colour, for all her usage of society and its steady discipline of the emotions. There are very stately gentlemen who walk Bond Street and Pall Mall, and who have something of the unscrupulous nature of their old sea-roving ancestors—a dash of the Viking—yet left in them, that only peeps out on abnormal occasions—a Cremorne row, a prize-fight, perhaps a hanging, possibly a stormy debate and mutinous division in the House—but now and then the ancient Adam, the antique throat-cutting, house-burning, buccaneering instinct lifts its head from under a load of civilisation.

Probably, for an instant, while Lord Ulswater was yet under the influence of his recent thoughts, there may have been something in his face that could not have failed to strike and startle so quick and keen an observer as Ruth Morgan; but it was gone in a moment. The cold, precise frost of conventionality, the wonderful elastic mask that we all wear, from the nursery to the grave, closed over the rift that had betrayed John Carnac's inner nature, as a sudden cracking of the crater-lip shews the dull crimson, the vivid scarlet, the bright yellow, of the fires within.

'I have been among the ghosts, Miss Morgan,' said Lord Ulswater smiling, and kind as ever: 'I like to look at the old rooms now and then.—Shall you drive?—No.—Then can I do anything for you, or say anything to our friends at Shellton Manor?'

CHAPTER XVIII.—DEALS WITH FLORA HASTINGS.

There is something to be said, perhaps, in favour of the Mohammedan canon which forbids all courtship before marriage. Some poetical or philosophical apologist for harem-life—Lord Levant, for instance, or Captain Hadji—might work the mine of thoughts therein suggested with much plausibility and profit. The honest, downright plan of wife-buying, of making large presents to the parents of an unseen maiden, whose very photograph is to us as a sealed book, and whose charms we must take on trust from the report of some old female wedding-broker, has some merits of its own: it saves trouble; it prevents accidents. There is no risk that eligible suitors, men who can, like the Roderigo of Shakspeare, put money in their purse, should be jockeyed by odious detriments or thwarted by feminine caprice. The money is paid, the sweetmeats and sherbets are got ready, the lambs are roasted whole, and lo! to the sound of drum, and fife, and cymbal, amid howling of women and banging of gongs, the bride is escorted in great state and dignity to the house of her future husband,

the Mollah reads the half-dozen Koran verses, and there is an end of the matter.

It would have been well, at anyrate, for the rich and envied young gentleman now canvassing the independent electors of Oakshire, if such oriental practices had prevailed in the England of Queen Victoria; for surely, in that case, Fortunatus Morgan, armed cap-à-pie in armour of pure gold, could surely have had nothing to fear from the opposition of earthly rival; his heavy purse must have turned the scale as well as the strong sword of Brennus could have done. All would have gone as he should wish, until at last the happy day should come, and bring with it, amid salvos of matchlocks, showers of rockets, and shouts of a multitude of kibaub-loving parasites, the gilded litter of the bride, to be borne triumphant to her new home.

But matters do not always proceed, in our British marriage-market, quite so smoothly as might be wished. The discipline is not so perfect, the etiquette less strict, and human hearts and human wills assert themselves, now and then, to the distress of wise old heads and the bewilderment of giddy young ones. Accidents, as we knew, even before the dawn of Mr Tupper's verse, cannot be wholly eliminated from the routine of even the most respectable of families.

So William Morgan was away, winning the suffrages of county electors, and meanwhile the treasure to keep which he would have given half his wealth lay unguarded to invite the spoiler—unguarded in fact, though not in theory, for, in addition to that poor little dragon, Ruth Morgan, who was zealous but powerless, were there not other dragons, who had teeth and talons wherewith to do battle, and who ought not to have been blind to the danger so near at hand. The Right Honourable Robert and his experienced wife were not the sort of simple, unworldly parents who think no evil because their lines have been cast in pleasant places and among humdrum folks. But it came to much the same thing. They were deaf and blind in their worldliness, secure in their own deep knowledge of those around them, and if they had a fear, it was of some change in Fortunatus Morgan, not in their daughter. 'If the fellow dared!' the Right Honourable Robert had said one day, in answer to an obscure hint from his wife that perhaps their son-in-law elect might be immersed in other silken fetters than those of Flora Hastings, should he stay too long away, exposed to the wiles of the artful matchmakers of Oakshire—'if the fellow dared!' The minister did not conclude his threat; but his angry voice, and angry eye, and the sudden swelling of the big veins on the wrinkled forehead, were as perfectly intelligible to Mrs Hastings as if he had spoken to the extent of four columns of small print. In truth, it would have been a rash act in such a one as William Morgan to play fast and loose with his engagement with a young lady whose father was knit in the strictest bonds of red tape and blood-relationship to the governing families of England. Such a step would be, politically, the cutting of his own throat. Mr Hastings—the Right Honourable Robert Drummond Eliot Hastings—knew well enough what engines he could set in motion to crush the parvenu pretender to a leadership in the councils of England, should the latter be mad enough to offer such an insult to the caste of high hereditary placemen.

But it did not occur to Flora's parents to watch

Flora herself. The girl was a good girl, so they averred, in tones of quiet self-congratulation, not one of those troublesome young women who gave their chaperons anxiety. There was that poor Countess of Stilton, for instance, always tormented by the difficult necessity for doing her duty by skittish Lady Annabel, whose infatuation for penniless, characterless Tom Jekyl, once of the Rifle Brigade, but now vehemently suspected of living on his talents at *écarté* and on the turf, had caused immense amusement to the wicked world, and annoyance to the noble family. There was Lady Laura Madcap, who had actually eloped with her music-master, but who, by great good-luck, had been overtaken by her brother, in consequence of an opportune break-down of the train that was bearing the truants Gretna-wards. The evil example of these young persons was not likely to be followed by a girl of Flora's excellent principles and docile nature, of that her parents were assured.

Meanwhile, Lord Ulswater's visits, rare at first, had become frequent, and at last constant, so that very much of his time was passed at Shellton Manor. The transition, though rapid, had been gradual. It had seemed so natural that the intimacy between the families of Carnac and Hastings should increase with the opportunities for easy intercourse which country-life affords to those who in the whirlpool of London fashion can seldom meet, that no one wondered that the owner of St Pagans should be continually at Shellton.

Flora Hastings could hardly have been in more dangerous society than that of her neighbour from the abbey. Handsomer men, even, than John Carnac, younger men to a certainty, and such as were reputed more fascinating, she had known and danced with in London, and not one of them had had the power to touch her heart. But she was not in London now—she had left the quick, hurrying round of pleasures, so thickly crowded together that they ceased to be pleasures, and became parts of a task that never seemed to end. Then the constant succession of new faces, each of which appeared to blot out the memory of its predecessor, prevented her thoughts from dwelling on any individual image. So her engagement had been rendered possible.

She was going to marry—she hardly knew why, but she believed that it was her duty so to act—she was going to marry Mr William Morgan. He was very rich. That fact had been dinned into her ears so very frequently, that she could never divest her lover from a sort of golden haze that clung to him whenever she looked at him, and through which he loomed, as Midas might have done, auriferous, cash-compelling. He was a good young man, virtuous, well-principled, excellent in every relation of life—so Flora Hastings had been told, though with less iteration than when the all-engrossing topic of wealth gave loose to her mother's tongue. Obviously, to be good was held an easier matter than to be rich. Had William Morgan been poor, he might have eclipsed the virtues of St Anthony without being deemed worthy of much mention. But he had lands and beeves, he had scrip and shares, and stock and debentures. No imagination could quite soar to the tremendous total of his wealth. Being so very rich, it was a crowning merit in him to be so very good. He was not personally disagreeable. Flora liked him, respected him, and perhaps liking and

respect are better foundations than those which prop up some fashionable marriages.

We manage those matters better in England than they did in Circassia, before Russia made an end of the poor Tcherkesses. They said, those Caucasian fathers and mothers: 'Amina, my dear, there is an offer for thee. Thou art bought and sold, my child, and Backsheesh Pasha is the purchaser.' But we of the polite western world do better than that. We do not say: 'Dora, my love, you have been knocked down to the bid of young Corncocks, or young Smallcole, or old Sheepshanks the Australian squatter, who has a quarter of a million of muttons grazing upon government land rented at a farthing an acre'—no; we are wiser in our generation. We point out the merits, pecuniary and personal, of young Corncocks, or young Smallcole, or that dear Sheepshanks, and hint not obscurely at our own displeasure, anger, affliction, if Dora is not ready to love, honour, and obey either of the three. It is her duty—her duty—and we wax awfully stern and impressive, and Dora is brow-beaten, hounded, frightened, bribed into forgetting young Charley, the briefless barrister-cousin; and she goes up with six bridemaids to the altar, and is Mrs Sheepshanks of Gashalunga, of Lostacres, in the county of Hants, and of Eaton Square, thenceforth and for ever.

So it was the duty of Flora Hastings to be the wife of William Morgan.

But William Morgan was away—and there was John, Lord Ulswater, ever at Shellton—handsome, glorious, grand John Carnac, king of fashion, almost the champion of his party, the man for whom hopeful prophets predicted a name that should last as long as our English language should endure to record it. When he spoke, a thrill ran through her. When he touched her hand, it trembled like a bird, timid, but joyful in its fearful love. The sound of his rich voice sent a tremor through her that she had never, never felt before. The glance of his eye had a magic that she learned now, for the first time, the old, world-old magic, that has made millions feel as Flora Hastings felt now. Yes, William Morgan was away, canvassing Oakshire, and the girl whom he valued more than fifty county constituencies was thinking by day and dreaming by night of John, Lord Ulswater.

A F A R E W E L L.

I LEAVE thee, dear, and fare thee well;
The words are spoken now,
But could they harm thee as they fell,
Thou shouldst not hear them—thou.
Forget that once I had a part
In one fleet dream of thine;
And break the mirror in thy heart
That tells too much of mine.
Farewell! I have no further right,
No fonder word to say;
Farewell, my darling, may thy night
Be fairer than my day.
And should this memory, though the last,
Be overfraught with pain,
Put down the crystal of the past,
And do not drink again.

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